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4 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
5 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
6 AT TACOMA

7 MAUNU REHAH WILLIAMS,

8 Plaintiff,

9 v.

10 JAMES STONIER (Cowlitz County Judge),
11 SUSAN BAUR (Cowlitz County District
12 Attorney), SGT. MOSES (Cowlitz County
13 Jail), and SAMUEL S. WARDLE (Attorney),

14 Defendants.

No. C11-5687 RBL/KLS

ORDER REGARDING PLAINTIFF'S
"MOTION FOR DISMISSAL OF
MAGISTRATE JUDGE"

15 Before the Court is Plaintiff's "Motion for Dismissal of Magistrate Judge Karen L.
16 Strombom as Judge, to Notify US House Judiciary Committee, for summary judgment by Judge
17 Leighton, and request for FBI to be Contacted." ECF No. 34. Plaintiff contends that the
18 undersigned has conspired to deprive him of his constitutional rights "to leave defendant time to
19 cover up and conceal this federal crime." *Id.*

20 **DISCUSSION**

21 Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 455(a), a judge of the United States shall disqualify herself in any
22 proceeding in which her impartiality "might reasonably be questioned." A federal judge also
23 shall disqualify herself in circumstances where she has a personal bias or prejudice concerning a
24 party or personal knowledge of disputed evidentiary facts concerning the proceeding. 28 U.S.C.
25 § 455(b)(1). Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 144:
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1 Whenever a party to any proceeding in a district court makes and files a timely
2 and sufficient affidavit that the judge before whom the matter is pending has a
3 personal bias or prejudice either against him or in favor of any adverse party, such
4 judge shall proceed no further therein, but another judge shall be assigned to hear
5 such proceeding.

6 Under both 28 U.S.C. §144 and 28 U.S.C. § 455, recusal of a federal judge is appropriate
7 if “a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts would conclude that the judge’s
8 impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” *Yagman v. Republic Insurance*, 987 F.2d 622, 626
9 (9th Cir.1993). This is an objective inquiry concerned with whether there is the appearance of
10 bias, not whether there is bias in fact. *Preston v. United States*, 923 F.2d 731, 734 (9th
11 Cir.1992); *United States v. Conforte*, 624 F.2d 869, 881 (9th Cir.1980). In *Liteky v. United*
12 *States*, 510 U.S. 540 (1994), the United States Supreme Court further explained the narrow basis
13 for recusal:

14 [J]udicial rulings alone almost never constitute a valid basis for a bias or partiality
15 motion. . . . [O]pinions formed by the judge on the basis of facts introduced or
16 events occurring in the course of the current proceedings, or of prior proceedings,
17 do not constitute a basis for a bias or partiality motion unless they display a deep
18 seated favoritism or antagonism that would make fair judgment impossible. Thus,
19 judicial remarks during the course of a trial that are critical or disapproving of, or
20 even hostile to, counsel, the parties, or their cases, ordinarily do not support a bias
21 or partiality challenge.

22 *Id.* at 555.

23 This Court makes rulings in each case based upon the issues presented by the parties or
24 upon *sua sponte* review by the Court. The undersigned has no personal bias or reason to be
25 partial to one side or the other in this matter and accordingly, the undersigned finds no reason to
26 recuse herself voluntarily from this case, and declines to do so.

1 **CONCLUSION**

2 There is no reasonable basis for a voluntary recusal in this instance. However, Plaintiff's
3 declaration of prejudice shall be referred to the Chief Judge for a determination of its merits.
4 Local Rules W.D. Wash. GR 8(c).

5 Accordingly it is hereby **ORDERED** that the undersigned **DECLINES** to recuse
6 voluntarily. Plaintiff's motion for recusal of the undersigned is **REFERRED** to Chief Judge
7 Marsha J. Pechman for decision and the Clerk of the Court is directed to place the motion for the
8 recusal of the undersigned on Judge Pechman's motion calendar.
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10 This action, and all motions currently pending before the Court are hereby **STAYED**
11 pending resolution of the recusal issue. No further motions shall be filed in this matter until the
12 stay is lifted. Any motion filed while the matter is stayed shall not be considered and shall be
13 dismissed.
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15 The Clerk of the Court shall send a copy of this Order to Plaintiff and to any parties who
16 have appeared in this action.

17 **DATED** this 8th day of November, 2011.
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20 Karen L. Strombom
21 United States Magistrate Judge
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